augmenting the STD junctions, increase in the exchange capacity, expansion of outdoor network etc.

Regularisation of Extra-Departmental Postal Employees

482. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA:
SARDAR GURCHARAN SINGH TOHRA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal for regularising the services of extra-departmental postal employees on the Central Government rolls;

(b) if so, the number of employees likely to be benefited; and

(c) by when a final decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) As on 31.03.99 there are 309915 extra-departmental agents in the Department of Posts. Improving the terms & conditions of employment of Extra-departmental agents including the prospects of eligible extra-departmental agents for absorption against regular vacancies is a continuing exercise. Existing rules of recruitment for Postmen, Postal Assistant/Sorting Assistant and Group 'D' cadre already provide for preference to eligible extra-departmental agents for recruitment against departmental posts.

(b) and (c) in view of reply to (a) above, do not arise.

Financial Assistance to Bharti Telecom

483. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the report captioned "IDFC gives Bharti Rs. 20 crore to buy telecom companies" published in Business Standard on February 1, 2000;

(b) whether it is a fact that Bharti televenture, a joint venture of Bharti Telecom and British Telecom is on a buying spree of so-called sick cellular telecom companies who were sought to have been failed out by Government through its migration package;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The licenses for Cellular Mobile Telephone Service are not transferable. However, the promoters/partners may transfer their equity subject to conditions of the license. While offering the Migration Package in respect of existing licenses to cellular companies, a condition has been imposed regarding a lock-in period of five years on existing share-holdings. Since M/s. Skycell Communications (P) Limited, Licensee for Cellular Mobile Telephone Service in Chennai had completed five years lock-in period, M/s. Crompton Greaves were allowed sale of their equity (40.5%) in M/s. Skycell Communications (P) Limited to M/s. Bharti Televenture Limited. In case of M/s. JT Mobile, 5 years lock in period has not been completed, no existing shareholder has been allowed to sell their stake to M/s. Bharti post migration.

Revenue Loss to DoT

484. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the report captioned "DoT estimates revenue loss at Rs. 3,000 crore" published in the 'Hindu' dated 27th January, 2000;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that the revenue has declined for DoT as a result of cost-based tariff recommended by TRAI;

(c) if so, the details thereof with circle-wise break-up;

(d) whether it is a fact that the traffic emanating from the high-end users did not increase as was anticipated by TRAI; and

(e) if so, a detailed comparison of high-end usage before and after tariff revision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF